

MECHANISM FOR DISABLING AN ELECTRONIC ASSEMBLY

ABSTRACT

5 A mechanism for provably disabling an electronic assembly such as a circuit
board. The mechanism comprises a tab or key, normally attached to the assembly
during operation, but which, when detached, prevents the assembly from being
fully functional. The key may comprise a portion of the assembly. The key
comprises a wire trace or other signal conductor that is severed when the key is
10 detached from the assembly. The assembly may fail to power up if the conductor
is broken, or a processing element on the assembly may detect the broken
conductor and disable some or all functionality of the assembly. The key may
also include an identification that can be used as evidence of the key removal.